

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GEORGE 00680 041830Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 COME-00
AGRE-00 IGA-02 AF-08 IO-13 /093 W
-----042338Z 055322 /61

R 041745Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SDCSTATE WASHDC 4441
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 0680

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, ECON, GY
SUBJECT: BURNHAM RADIO INTERVIEW

SUMMARY: IN RADIO INTERVIEW APRIL 2, PM BURNHAM SAID HE EXPECTED RELATIONS WITH US TO IMPROVE. PM PREDICTED THAT ECONOMIC CRISIS WOULD SOON BE OVERCOME AND THAT TEMPORARY RESTRICTION ON IMPORTS FROM CARICOM COUNTRIES WOULD NOT ENDANGER FUTURE OF THAT ORGANIZATION. BURNHAM'S STATEMENT CONCERNING IMPROVEMENT IN US-GOG RELATIONS IS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF IMPROVED GOG ATTITUDE TOWARD THE US. END SUMMARY.

1. IN INTERVIEW ON GOVERNMENT RADIO STATION APRIL 2, PRIME MINISTER BURNHAM SAID HE EXPECTED RELATIONS WITH US TO IMPROVE SINCE IMPRESSION GIVEN DURING FONMIN WILLS' VISIT TO WASHINGTON WAS THAT RELATIONS QUOTE CAN, WILL AND SHOULD BE IMPROVED ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING UNQUOTE.

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2. BURNHAM LABELLED PPP CRITICAL SUPPORT LINE MORE CRITICAL THAN SUPPORTIVE AND WARNED THAT ATTEMPTS TO DISRUPT ECONOMY THROUGH SUGAR INDUSTRY WOULD BE MET FIRMLY.

3. BURNHAM SAID THAT LAST YEAR IN PARLIAMENT HE HAD NOT ANNOUNCED THAT ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD IN 1978. HE HAD SAID

THAT ELECTIONS WERE CONSTITUTIONALLY DUE IN 1978 BUT THAT HE COULD CALL ELECTIONS BEFORE THEN.

4. TURNING TO ECONOMIC SITUATION, BURNHAM CLAIMED THAT RECENT DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD STUFFS HAD ALLEVIATED SHORTAGES AND HAD FLUSHED OUT HOARDERS. PM POINTED OUT THAT CERTAIN ITEMS COULD NOT BE IMPORTED DUE TO SHORTAGE OF FOREIGN RESERVES, BUT HE DISPELLED RUMORS THAT WATER SHORTAGE HAD BEEN CAUSED BY LACK OF FUNDS TO REPLACE WELLS AND BUY WATER PURIFICATION CHEMICALS. THROUGH CAREFUL PLANNING, DURING 1974 AND 1975 SURPLUS OF FOREIGN RESERVES HAD BEEN SPENT ON INFRASTRUCTURAL WORKS, SETTING UP OF SMALL INDUSTRIES AND AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO FUTURE BUILD-UP OF ECONOMY.

5. ON REGIONAL MATTERS, BURNHAM MAINTAINED THAT RESTRICTION OF IMPORTS, IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES, AND REQUEST FOR ASSOCIATION WITH CMEA WOULD NOT WEAKEN CARICOM. GUYANA IS ANCHOR OF THAT ORGANIZATION. BURNHAM REITERATED THAT GOG POLICY CONCERNING SPORTSMEN WHO PLAY IN SOUTH AFRICA OR RHODESIA HAD NOT ALTERED, BUT HE HOPED ISSUE WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH COMMON CARICOM POSITION. ALTHOUGH CALLING SOCIALISM ANSWER TO GUYANA'S PROBLEMS, PM EMPHASIZED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO FORCE THAT IDEOLOGY UPON ANY OTHER STATE.

6. COMMENT: THIS WAS THE FIRST PUBLIC STATEMENT BURNHAM HAS MADE CONCERNING THE IMPROVEMENT IN US-GOG RELATIONS. IT FOLLOWS UP ON AND REINFORCES SIGNALS THAT

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DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER REID GAVE IN HIS FEBRUARY 17 REPUBLIC DAY SPEECH AND ON PUBLIC STATEMENTS FONMIN WILLS HAS MADE. IT PROVIDES FURTHER EVIDENCE OF GOG DESIRE TO REVERSE THE DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS WITH THE US. BURNHAM'S INTERVIEW ALSO PROBABLY WAS INTENDED TO SHOW THAT HE IS IN GOOD HEALTH AND TO REASSURE THE GUYANESE CONCERNING WATER AND FOOD SHORTAGES AND THE SERIOUS ECONOMIC SITUATION. DURING THE PAST SIX WEEKS THESE SHORTAGES HAVE AROUSED WIDESPREAD GRUMBLING AND ACCUSATIONS OF GOVERNMENT MISMANAGEMENT IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF FOODSTUFFS. BURNHAM SPOKE MORE SLOWLY THAN WAS HIS PRACTICE BEFORE HIS HEART ATTACK. BLACKEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Secure: OPEN
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Subject: BURNHAM RADIO INTERVIEW SUMMARY: IN RADIO INTERVIEW APRIL 2, PM BURNHAM SAID HE EXPECTED RELATIONS WITH US TO IMPROVE. PM PREDICTE
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, ECON, GY, (BURNHAM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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